

УДК 811.111(07)

Л. М. Лук'яненко

Л. Н. Лукьяненко

L. N. Lukianenko

*Дніпропетровський національний університет імені Олеся Гончара*  
*Днепропетровский национальный университет имени Олеся Гончара*  
*Oles Honchar Dnipropetrovsk National University*

**ПРОБЛЕМА ВИБОРУ МАТЕРІАЛУ ДЛЯ ЧИТАННЯ ДЛЯ СТУДЕНТІВ  
СЕРЕДНЬОГО РІВНЯ КОМПЕТЕНЦІЙ, ЯКІ ВИВЧАЮТЬ АНГЛІЙСКУ  
МОВУ ЯК ОСНОВНУ ІНОЗЕМНУ, НА ЗАНЯТТЯХ З ДОМАШНЬОГО  
ЧИТАННЯ**

**ПРОБЛЕМА ВЫБОРА МАТЕРИАЛА ДЛЯ ЧТЕНИЯ ДЛЯ СТУДЕНТОВ  
СРЕДНЕГО УРОВНЯ КОМПЕТЕНЦИИ, ИЗУЧАЮЩИХ АНГЛИЙСКИЙ  
ЯЗЫК КАК ОСНОВНОЙ ИНОСТРАННЫЙ, НА ЗАНЯТИЯХ  
ПО ДОМАШНЕМУ ЧТЕНИЮ**

**THE PROBLEM OF THE CHOICE OF READING MATERIAL  
FOR INTERMEDIATE EFL STUDENTS MAJORING IN ENGLISH  
IN HOME-READING CLASSES**

Розглянуто проблему вибору матеріалу для читання для студентів першого курсу філологічних факультетів університетів, які вивчають англійську мову як основну іноземну, на заняттях з домашнього читання. Основну увагу приділено автентичним і методично автентичним текстам літературних творів, зокрема їх перевагам і недолікам. Незважаючи на те, що автентичним текстам, спочатку не призначеним для навчальних цілей, часто надається перевага, використання тільки такого роду матеріалів у навчальному процесі здається нереальним, особливо при навчанні груп студентів різних здібностей, де деякі з них на початку першого року навчання в університеті ще не досягли компетенції середнього рівня. Таким студентам можуть бути запропоновані методично автентичні тексти, що відповідають не тільки стандартам і цілям природної комунікації, але також їх інтелектуальному та мовному рівню. Крім того, розглянуто переваги використання художньої літератури та одного з її жанрів – короткого оповідання, при навчанні читання студентів першого курсу, які вивчають англійську мову як основну іноземну. Не претендуючи розглянути всі аспекти даної проблеми в рамках однієї статті, автор даного дослідження ставить своєю метою виділити особливості роботи з автентичними і методично автентичними літературними текстами на заняттях з домашнього читання. Плануючи роботу з методично автентичними матеріалами у групах студентів різних здібностей, викладачам слід балансувати між сильними і слабкими студентами, підтримуючи їх інтерес індивідуальними завданнями. Розробляючи практикум з домашнього читання на основі автентичних матеріалів, їм необхідно звернути особливу увагу на завдання, які спрямовані на зняття мовних труднощів сприйняття тексту.

*Ключові слова:* відповідність змісту інтересам читача, придатність до використання, читабельність, автентичні тексти, методично автентичні тексти, коротке оповідання, групи студентів різних здібностей.

Рассмотрена проблема выбора материала для чтения для студентов первого курса филологических факультетов университетов, изучающих английский язык как основной иностранный, на занятиях по домашнему чтению. Основное внимание

уделено аутентичним і методически аутентичним текстам літературних произведень, в частині їх переваг і недоліків. Незважаючи на те, що аутентичним текстам, значально не призначеним для навчальних цілей, часто віддається перевага, використання тільки такого роду матеріалів в навчальному процесі здається нереальним, в особливості при навчанні груп студентів різних здібностей, де деякі з них в початку першого року навчання в університеті ще не досягли компетенції середнього рівня. Таким студентам можуть бути запропоновані методически аутентичні тексти, що відповідають не тільки стандартам і цілям природної комунікації, але також їх інтелектуальному і мовному рівню. Крім того, розглянуті переваги використання художньої літератури і одного з її жанрів – короткого розповіді, при навчанні читанню студентів першого курсу, вивчаючих англійську мову як основну іноземну. Не претендуючи розглянути всі аспекти даної проблеми в межах однієї статті, автор даного дослідження ставить своєю метою виділити особливості роботи з аутентичними і методически аутентичними літературними текстами на заняттях по домашньому читанню. Плануючи роботу з методически аутентичними матеріалами в групах студентів різних здібностей, викладачам слід балансувати між сильними і слабкими студентами, підтримуючи їх інтерес індивідуальними завданнями. Розробляючи практикум по домашньому читанню на основі аутентичних матеріалів, їм необхідно звернути особливу увагу на завдання, які направлені на зняття мовних труднощів сприйняття тексту.

*Ключові слова:* відповідність змісту інтересам читача, придатність до використання, читабельність, аутентичні тексти, методически аутентичні тексти, короткий розповідь, групи студентів різних здібностей.

The article is devoted to the problem of the choice of reading material for intermediate EFL students studying English as their major in home-reading classes. It focuses on authentic and learner-authentic texts of literary works, in particular their advantages and disadvantages. Although some EFL teachers prefer authentic texts, which are written for use by the foreign language community, not for language learners, the use of only authentic materials in teaching process seems to be unreal, especially if language teachers deal with mixed-ability classes where some students in their first year of study at university have not yet achieved intermediate competence. At the beginning of the academic year first-year students can be offered learner-authentic texts that correspond not only to standards and aims of natural communication, but also to students' intellectual and language level. Besides, the article considers the main advantages of using fiction and one of its genres – a short story, in teaching reading to intermediate EFL students. Without pretending to treat all the aspects of the problem, the author of the article makes it her aim to single out peculiarities of work with authentic and learner-authentic literary texts in home-reading classes. Planning work with learner-authentic materials in mixed-ability classes, teachers should balance between the best students and those who are weak in studies by giving them individual tasks that keep them interested in reading these materials. Working out activities on the basis of authentic materials, teachers should pay special attention to tasks which help to remove barriers to understanding the text.

*Keywords:* suitability of content, exploitability, readability, authentic texts, learner-authentic texts, short story, mixed-ability classes.

Reading is not only an enjoyable process but also a fundamental skill that promotes language and memory development, stimulates imagination, broadens outlook and improves language understanding. It is an effective means of teaching different speech habits and skills. Reading is often integrated with listening, speaking and writing and is considered to be the basis of their further development. Without doubt, there

is a strong correlation between reading and academic success, as it is the best way of acquiring a large vocabulary, enhancing creativity and immersion in another cultural atmosphere. There is no denying that reading is of primary importance in providing EFL students' language competence and critical thinking skills.

Home-reading classes are an essential and integral part of educational process in faculties of foreign languages. They promote better acquisition of the target language, expand students' knowledge of the cultural background of the country whose language they learn. The choice of reading material in the language classroom is one of the main problems EFL teachers may face sooner or later, especially when they deal with mixed-ability classes where some students in their first year of study at university have not yet achieved intermediate competence which involves greater fluency and general comprehension of some general authentic English.

There has been frequent discussion about reading texts which are suitable for EFL students. A range of criteria for choosing and exploiting texts have been treated by E. Williams [8], M.P. Breen [2], C. Wallace [7], S. Silberstein [6], J. F. Savage [5], L. Lier [3], Ch. Nuttall [4] and other theorists in this field. Basic criteria that influence the choice of reading materials are suitability of content, exploitability and readability. *Suitability of content* is far and away the most important criterion because «the text should interest the readers – preferably enthrall and delight them» [4, p.170]. *Exploitability* is the second important criterion after interest. When teachers exploit a text, they make use of it to develop EFL students' competence as readers [4, p. 171]. The term *readability* is often used to refer to the combination of structural and lexical difficulty [4, p. 174]. If EFL teachers are concerned about the effectiveness of the chosen material, they should regard the level of their learners and the level of the text they are going to work with.

The purpose of this article is to treat the problem of the choice of reading material for intermediate language students studying English as their major in home-reading classes, in particular authentic and learner-authentic texts of literary works by English and American authors, to consider the main advantages of using fiction and one of its genres – a short story, in teaching reading to intermediate EFL students, and single out peculiarities of work with authentic and learner-authentic literary texts in home-reading classes.

There is no denying that choosing appropriate reading material is one of the constituents of the success in teaching reading. Some EFL teachers prefer to use authentic texts, i.e. «texts written for use by the foreign language community, not for language learners» [4, p. 177]. There are a number of reasons for preferring them. First of all, they are motivating because they are different in style and subject-matter, they can encourage reading for pleasure because they are likely to contain topics of interest for EFL students. Besides, the use of authentic texts with an interesting cultural component can become a stimulus for discussion of different problems in class. Also, they are a very effective means for teaching students the culture of the country of the target language. Moreover, they demonstrate functioning of the language in the form it is used by native speakers in its natural social context [1, p. 12–13]. Finally, authentic texts «exhibit the characteristics of true discourse: having something to say, being coherent and clearly organized» [4, p. 177].

But the use of only authentic materials in teaching process seems to be unreal. Linguistically difficult texts are unlikely to be suitable for developing most skills, especial-

ly if they result in the use of translation or any kind of substantial intervention from the teacher. It may be necessary to simplify texts so that students can do most of the work of making sense of them. Simplification for this purpose involves removing barriers to understanding (for example, difficult words, complex structures, etc.), but if you are not careful, you may also remove the basic qualities of the text as discourse. First-year students can be offered simplified or learner-authentic texts in home-reading classes if they do not distort the natural use of language. The most significant advantage of these texts is that they correspond not only to standards and aims of natural communication, but also to methodological demands, to students' intellectual and language level. Together with authentic texts, which can also be exploited in home-reading classes by means of tasks not demanding detailed understanding, simplified texts may be motivating having something new to EFL students, helping learners in enriching their knowledge of the target language and at the same time being easy enough for their comprehension to get pleasure from reading in the target language.

Home-reading classes are mainly conducted on the basis of authentic texts of literary works by English and American writers. The advantages of literature teaching in any course are obvious. Literary works can be very enjoyable to read, they provide examples of different styles of writing, they are a good basis for vocabulary expansion, they develop learners' reading skills, and can supply an excellent jump-off point for follow-up to reading activities, in particular debates, discussions, role play, dramatization, reviews associated with the text. Literature is part of the target culture, it encourages students' critical and creative thinking, raises their awareness of different human situations. Last but not least, it involves emotions as well as intellect, which adds to learners' motivation and may contribute to their personal development.

Integrating literature in EFL teaching is necessary due to its rich potential to provide an authentic model of language use. Among literary genres, short stories seem to be the most suitable choice for this aim. They are easier to read, which gives the opportunity for EFL learners to work effectively with the whole text. They begin as close to the conclusion as possible, grab the reader from the very first line, typically focus on the problem, drive towards a sudden, unexpected revelation, they are written in prose whose format tends to be more pointed than longer works of fiction, such as novellas and novels. Although short stories have a limited number of protagonists, they have a compelling plot, which makes them captivating and therefore motivating. Besides, the characters as well as all underlying meanings are unmasked in the end, providing learners with a variety of questions for discussion.

Selecting texts for teaching literature to intermediate EFL students in home-reading classes, teachers should completely exclude texts which are of little value for students, in particular those which are not informative, instructive and do not respond to their emotional and cognitive interests. The use of simplified educational texts in home-reading classes can be justified when university teachers deal with mixed-ability classes where students are in their first year of study at the beginning of the academic year. Heterogeneous classes are represented by students at different levels – some with quite competent English, intermediate students, some whose English is not very good and some with a low level on entry. Conducting home-reading classes on the basis of learner-authentic texts of literary works by English and American writers, EFL teachers should balance between the best students and those who are weak in studies and need special attention. One of the ways of dealing with problems of mixed-ability classes

is to provide good students with some spare activity material. Another solution is to plan extensions to the original task so that, if some learners finish early, they can do extra work on it. Finally, to keep academically bright students interested in reading learner-authentic texts, EFL teachers can assign more challenging tasks to them. For example, at the pre-reading stage they can make predictions about the content of the text based on the title, quotations taken from the text and their knowledge of the topic. EFL teachers can also rely on higher level students to present new vocabulary to weaker students. At the post-reading stage more able students can answer some interpretation questions, describe some of the characters of the story or write and dramatize a dialogue with a partner, while weak students can be given true-false statements or multiple-choice comprehension tests.

But however good a simplification is, something is always lost, that is why some EFL teachers refuse to use simplified versions even working with first-year students. The work with authentic materials has its peculiarities. Removing barriers to understanding the text at the pre-reading stage is one of the most essential and challenging tasks that EFL teachers should take upon themselves while working out a set of activities designed for this stage. It includes dealing with new vocabulary and grammatical structures which students need to be familiar with before reading an authentic text. Conducting home-reading classes on the basis of literary works, EFL teachers should also comment on some proper names and decode abbreviations. With regard to new language, it is not necessary to teach all the new words and structures in the text before reading. Firstly, the new language can often be more easily and effectively learnt during the process of reading, students can guess the meaning of some unfamiliar words from context. Secondly, properly designed language-based tasks at this stage do not always envisage complete comprehension of the text.

The while-reading stage with its activities helps EFL students to interact with the text thoroughly and repeatedly so that they can become familiar with the words and ideas. Exercises that should be done at this stage are connected with reading and rereading of the whole text and its parts to determine the gist of the story, to search for specific pieces of information and establish logical connection between separate facts. In this case the techniques of scanning and skimming are widely used. They enable learners to select parts of the text which they did not understand and need to be interpreted or discussed later or those which they particularly liked. Looking through the text and finding English equivalents for some words and word combinations at the while-reading stage can be very useful for intermediate students in post-reading. It will help them to select active vocabulary which will be necessary for them to answer some comprehension and interpretation questions and participate in final discussion when reading has been completed. Authentic texts of literary works by English and American writers that involve analysis of people's actions or discussion of different points of view can be brought alive by means of drama and role play. These communicative activities develop fluency in EFL students, which promotes interaction in home-reading classes and increases learners' motivation.

All things considered, success in teaching reading fiction to intermediate EFL students majoring in English can partly be achieved by choosing appropriate reading material. Using fiction, in particular a short story, EFL teachers can stimulate learners' personal involvement by arousing their interest and provoking strong positive reactions from them. The choice of reading material in home-reading classes depends on each



particular group of students, their needs, interests, cultural background and language level. However, one primary factor to consider is whether a particular work is able to serve the needs of learners and encourage them for further studying.

A wide and promising area of future research might be problems of teaching reading fiction to mixed-ability EFL classes and their effective solutions.

### References

1. **Носонович Е. В.** Методическая аутентичность в обучении иностранным языкам / Е. В. Носонович // ИЯШ. – 2000. – № 1. – С. 11–15.
2. **Breen M. P.** Authenticity in the Language Classroom / M. P. Breen // Applied Linguistics. – 1985. – 6/1. – P. 60–70.
3. **Lier L.** Interaction in the Language Curriculum. Awareness. Autonomy and Authenticity / L. Lier. – London : Longman, 1996. – 248 p.
4. **Nuttall Ch.** Teaching Reading Skills in a Foreign Language / Ch. Nuttal. – Oxford : Macmillan Heinemann English Language Teaching, 1998. – 282 p.
5. **Savage J. F.** Teaching Reading Using Literature / J. F. Savage. – Madison : Brown and Benchmark Publishers, 1994. – 464 p.
6. **Silberstein S.** Techniques and Resources in Teaching Reading / S. Silberstein. – Oxford : OUP, 1994. – 125 p.
7. **Wallace C.** Reading / C. Wallace. – Oxford : OUP, 1992. – 155 p.
8. **Williams E.** Reading in the Language Classroom / E. Williams. – London : Macmillan, 1984. – 263 p.

*Надійшла до редколегії 09.11.2014 р.*

УДК 378.147.016:81'243:378.1.014.3

**А. О. Мунтян**

**А. А. Мунтян**

**A. A. Muntian**

*Дніпропетровський національний університет залізничного транспорту*

*Днепропетровский национальный университет*

*железнодорожного транспорта*

*Dnipropetrovsk national university of railway transport*

### ВИКОРИСТАННЯ АВТЕНТИЧНИХ ПИСЬМОВИХ ТА АУДИО/ВІДЕОМАТЕРІАЛІВ ПРИ НАВЧАННІ ІНОЗЕМНОЇ МОВИ ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕ АУТЕНТИЧНЫХ ПИСЬМЕННЫХ И АУДИО/ВИДЕОМАТЕРИАЛОВ ПРИ ОБУЧЕНИИ ИНОСТРАННОМУ ЯЗЫКУ USING OF AUTHENTIC WRITTEN AND AUDIO/VIDEO MATERIALS WHEN TEACHING THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Зроблено спробу дослідити актуальні проблеми використання автентичних текстів та аудіо/відеоматеріалів під час навчання іноземної мови. Йде мова про різні підходи до трактування поняття автентичних матеріалів, а також про доцільність їх використання під час проведення занять з іноземної мови. Увагу приділено аргументації та доведенню доцільності використання автентичних матеріалів під час

© А. О. Мунтян, 2015